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PREFACE.

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THE EDITOR.

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FABLES AND PARABLES.

THE GREEN-FINCH AND THE NIGHT-IN- GALE.

A GREENFINCH and a Nightingale once sung on a bough before the window of a cottage.

A little boy could not tell which was the song-ster that was singing so sweet-ly. His father led him for-ward, and asked him to point out which of the two it was.

“That bird with the pretty bright colors, I should say,” cried the little boy.

“Why, do you think that the *other* is not the song-ster, my son?”

“Because *it* is so dull and plain-looking,” he replied.

Surely that must have been a *very* little boy!

THE BEE AND THE SHEEP.

"HAVE you, among all the beasts, a better friend than we are?" said a Bee to a Man.

"Yes; a much greater one," he replied.

"And who is that, pray?"

"The Sheep; for his wool is needful to us, but your honey is only pleas-ant."

"Oh! is that all?" re-turn'd the Bee, in rather a wasp-ish way.

"No," said the Man. "The Sheep gives his wool *will-ing-ly*; but you never part with your honey without stinging us."

THE WOLF AND THE SHEPHERD.

"SHEPHERD, what think you of my skin?" ask'd a Wolf, one day.

"Your skin?" said the Shepherd. "Show it to me. Well, it is beautiful!"

"Now, look here, Shepherd: I am old, and

I cannot live much longer. Give me food and shelter till I die, and I will let you have my skin."

"Oho! that is good!" said the Shepherd. "But I am not the man you take me for, Mr. See-grim. No, no! In the end your skin would cost me a pretty penny. How-ever, if you want to make me a present of it, do it now. Why not?"

On this the Shepherd seized a club to fell the Wolf; but away he fled.



ROBIN RED-BREAST AND JENNY WREN.

'TWAS once upon a time
When Jenny Wren was young,
So daintily she danced,
And so prettily she sung;
Robin Redbreast lost his heart,
For he was a gal-lant bird;
So he doff'd his hat to Jenny Wren,
Re-requesting to be heard.

O dearest Jenny Wren,
If you will but be mine,
You shall feed on cherry-pie, you shall,
And drink new currant-wine.
I'll dress you like a gold-finch,
Or any pea-cock gay:
So, dearest Jen, if you'll be mine,
Let us ap-point the day.

Jenny blush'd behind her fan,
And thus de-clared her mind:
Since, dearest Bob, I love you well,
I take your offer kind;
Cherry-pie is very nice,
And so is currant-wine;
But I must wear my plain brown gown,
And never go too fine.

Robin Redbreast rose be-times,
All at the break of day,
And he flew to Jenny Wren's house,
And sung a round-e-lay.

He sung of Robin Redbreast
And little Jenny Wren,
And when he came unto the end,
He then began again.



THE TWO GOATS.

Two Goats, who had long fed together in a meadow, set out to take a journey on the mountains. One Goat went one way, and the other went another way.

After some time, they met again, but a stream of water ran between them: and over the stream was laid a plank of wood,—so narrow, there was only just room for one Goat to cross it at a time.

Now these Goats were proud, and neither of them was willing to let the other cross first. “I have as good a right to the bridge as you have,” said the one. “The bridge was as much made for me as for you,” said the other.

Thus they quarrell'd for some time, at last one Goat set his foot on the plank, and the other did the same. They looked very fierce at each other, as much as to say, "I will go on in spite of you."

And so they did: but when they met in the middle, there was no room for them to pass; so they both slipt into the water, and were drowned.

TWO OTHER GOATS.

Two kind Goats always lived in peace, and tried to help each other. One Goat was ill, and the other brought him green herbs, from a field far off; the sick Goat ate the herbs, and they cured him.

The other Goat had a pretty little Kid, which she loved dearly. One day, when the Goat had gone out, a rude boy came to take the Kid: but the Goat who had been ill, and was got better, poked the boy with his horns,

and drove him away, and took care of the Kid till its mother came home.

Once when the two Goats were travel-ling, they met on the middle of a very nar-row bridge—just as the two ill-natured Goats did—but they did not push one another into the water. No! They stood still a moment, to try whether they could go back safe-ly. When they found they could not, one of them crouch'd down on the bridge, and let the other walk over his back.

You may be sure the Goat who had to walk over the other, took care to step soft-ly, and not to hurt so kind a friend.

And so they both got safe-ly over; and all who knew them loved the two kind Goats.



THE ANG-LER AND THE YOUNG FISH.

A MAN, ang-ling in a river, caught a small Perch. As he was taking it off the hook, the fish open'd its mouth and begg'd he would throw it into the river again.

The man asked his reason. "Why," said the fish, "because at present I am but young and little, and therefore not so well worth as I shall be when I am larger."

"That may be, but I am not the fool you take me for; '*A fish in the hand is worth two in the water,*' you know."

With that he put the Perch into his basket and walked away.



THE FOX AND THE TIGER.

"I ENVY your speed and strength," said the Fox to the Tiger.

"And is there nothing else of mine you would like to have?" asked the Tiger.

"I know of nothing," said Foxy.

"What! not my beaut-i-ful skin? It would suit you to a T."

"That is the very reason I do not wish it," answered the wily Reynard. "It's no business of mine to show people what I really am. I would rather have my hair cover'd with feathers."

THE SHEEP AND THE SWAL-LOW.

A SWALLOW flew down on a Sheep's back to steal some wool for her nest. The Sheep was very angry.

The Swallow said:—"What is the matter with you? Don't you let the shepherd take away *all* your wool? Surely then you can spare me the small-est pick!"

"The reason," said the Sheep, "is this:—the way you take my wool is quite dif-fer-ent from the way in which the shepherd takes it."

THE MERRY LAMB.

"LITTLE Lamb, come here and say
What you're doing all the day?"

"Long enough before you wake
Break-fast I am glad to take,
In the meadow eating up
Daisy, cow-slip, butter-cup.
Then about the fields I play,
Frisk and scamper all the day:
When I'm thirsty I can drink
Water at the river's brink:
When at night I go to sleep,
By my mother I must keep:
I am safe enough from cold
At her side within the fold."

THE BUSY BEE.

"LITTLE Bee, come here and say,
What you're doing all the day?"

"Oh, every day, and all day long,
Among the flowers you hear my song.
I creep in every bud I see,
And all the honey is for me;
I take it to the hive with care
And give it to my brothers there:
That when the winter time comes on,
And all the flowers are dead and gone,
And when the wind is cold and rough,
The busy bees may have enough."

THE LAZY FLY.

"LITTLE Fly, come here and say
What you're doing all the day?"

"Oh, I'm a gay and merry fly,
I never do anything—no, not I—

I go where I like, and I stay where I
please,

In the heat of the sun, or the shade of the
trees ;

On the window-pane, or the cup-board shelf ;
And I care for nothing except myself.

I cannot tell, it is very true,

When the winter comes what I mean to do :
And I very much fear, when I'm getting
old,

I shall starve with hunger, or die of cold."



THE NIGHT-IN-GALE AND THE CAGE.

A MAN went one day to the house of a
rich Squire. There he heard a bird singing in
a gilt cage. It was a Nightingale.

The Man stood and listen'd to the music ;
and he was sad.

Then came the servants of the rich Squire,
and asked the Man why he stood dream-ing
there.

The man answered : — "I was wonder-ing

how a master like yours could keep such a pris-on-er in so grand a house."

"Why not? Is its song not sweet to the ear?"

"True," answered the Man; "but in the fields and woods how much more sweet! There it sings the song of free-dom."

The servants all laughed at the Man, and called him a silly clown. He held his peace, and quietly turned home-wards.



THE BEAR.

A BEAR who was bred in the savage des-erts of Si-be-ri-a, took it into his head that he would like to see the world. He travell'd from forest to forest, and from one country to another.

One day he came by chance into a Farmer's yard, when he saw a number of fowls drinking by the side of a pool. Seeing that at every sip they turned up their heads towards the sky, he could not help asking the reason.

They told him it was their way of re-turn-ing thanks to heaven for all their blessings. Here the Bear burst into a fit of laugh-ter and mock'd them.

At this the Cock, with his wonted boldness, chided the Bear thus:—

“As you are a stranger, Sir, you may perhaps be pardon'd this behaviour; yet, give me leave to tell you that none but a Bear would scoff at any pious act what-so-ever, in the presence of those who believe in its importance.”

THE ASS AND THE LION.

KING LION took a fancy to hunt with the Ass. He made him hide in a thicket, and bray as loudly as he could, adding:—

“Without doubt, the beasts will all be so heart-ily frighten'd, they will flee out of the wood. I shall lie in wait out-side, and eat them up as they come.”

Each took his place ac-cord-ing-ly; and pre-

sently the hor-rid bray-ing of the Ass sent the beasts all scamp-er-ing out of the wood.

King Lion, when he had had his fill, sung out to the Ass to leave off. The Donkey did so. Then up he frisk'd to King Lion, and asked how he liked his braying.

"Oh, capitally!" said the Lion. "Had I not been in the se-cret, I would have been in terror myself."



MY LADY WIND.

MY Lady Wind, my Lady Wind,
Went round about the house to find
A chink to get her foot in;
She tried the key-hole in the door.
She tried the crev-ice in the floor,
And drove the chimney soot in.

And then one night, when it was dark,
She blew up such a tiny spark,

That all the house was pother'd.
From it she raised up such a flame
As blazed away to Belting Lane,
And White Cross folks were smother'd.

And thus when once, my little dears,
A whisper reaches itch-ing ears,
The same will come, you'll find.
Take my advice, restrain your tongue,
Remember what Old Nurse has sung
Of busy Lady Wind.

THE YOUNG MOUSE.

A YOUNG Mouse lived in a cup-board where
sweet-meats were kept. She dined every day
upon bis-cuit, mar-ma-lade, and fine sugar.
Never did any little Mouse live so well.

She had often dared to peep at the family
while they sat at supper. Sometimes she even
stole on the carpet, and pick'd up the crumbs.
Nobody ever hurt her.

Well, one day she came to her mother in

great joy, squeak-ing out, "Mother! the good people of this family have built me a house to live in; it is in the cupboard. I am sure it is for me, for it is just the right size. The bottom is of wood, and it is covered all over with wires. There is a door too, just big enough for me, so that puss cannot follow me. The good people have put in some toasted cheese, which smells so nice I should have run in di-rect-ly; but I thought I would tell *you* first. Let us go in together, and both lodge there to-night; for it will hold us both.

"My dear child," said the old Mouse, "it is lucky you did not go in: for your fine house is nothing but a trap. You would never have come out again, ex-cept to have been devour'd by the cat, or drown'd. Though man has not so fierce a look as a cat, he is still more cun-ning, and certainly no friend of ours."*

* Evenings at Home.

THE COURS-ER, AND THE FOX WITH KING LION.

IN the Court of King Lion, there was a noble Horse. He was his royal master's most faith-ful servant; and King Lion loved him above all others.

This sorely grieved the Court rabble; and the Fox under-took to get rid of the royal pet. And this was his plan:—

He whisper'd in King Lion's ear many mean and naughty things about the Horse.

But the King of Animals turn'd a deaf ear to the craf-ty Reynard; and he made him this noble and wise answer:—

“It is the best sign of the worth of my pretty Courser, that he has a wretch like thee as his en-emy.”

THE DISCONTENTED ASS.

IN the middle of a cold Winter, a poor Ass wished heart-ily for Spring. He longed for warm weather, and above every-thing for a mouth-ful of fresh grass.

In a short time, according to his wish, spring weather and the fresh grass came. But then, he had such hard work in carry-ing man-ure to the field, that he was tired of Spring too; and now he longed for Summer to come.

Summer came indeed, but then came hay cart and harv-est work, and more toil-ing and drudg-ing than ever. So he began to think that Autumn would bring him ease and happiness.

But Autumn was still worse, for there were po-ta-toes to be carried home, and apples to be taken to market. Last of all, turf and peat were to be fetched for fuel. In short, there was more work for him than ever.

Then, thought he, "since every season has its troubles it may have its comforts as well."

And he learnt to en-joy the rest and quiet of the Winter, as well as the sweet grass of Spring.

There was the warmth of Summer, and the bite of hay; and there were the apples and the carrots which the children gave him in Autumn.

Thus he learnt that every season affords pleasure as well as pain; and that he must pick up the sweets with the bitters, as he jogg'd along.

THE BEAR, THE WOLF, AND MAN.

THE Wolf met the Bear, and mocked him because he always carried his head so low. "But, without joking," said the Wolf, "there is something your head sadly needs."

"Well, what is that?" asked the Bear.

"Why, horns or ant-lers. The Bull has horns, the Stag has ant-lers; and so on with other animals not half so good as you."

"But, how am I to get them?" inquired the Bear.

The Wolf told him to go to Man, for he was the best hand at that sort of thing.

The Bear did as he was bid: and asked for a nice pair of horns.

"Certainly; why not?" replied the Man. "But of course you will give me something in return; say a piece of your body."

"Of my body?" repeated the Bear, in wonder.

"Yes; but don't be af-raid. I want neither your eyes nor your feet, but only your ears."

The silly Bear agreed, and let the Man cut off his ears.

Man then brought out saws and gim-lets, and a number of such things.

"What are these for?" asked the Bear in dis-may.

"To bore two holes in your head, to be sure!"

"Eh? What do you say? Bore two holes in my head? Are you crazy?"

“How then am I to fix the horns, my man?”

Well, the Bear took to his heels, crying out: —

“Oh! what a fool am I to have given my use-ful ears in the hope of get-ting what to me would be a use-less or-na-ment!”



THE OLD MAN AND HIS ASS.

AN old Man and a little Boy were driving an Ass to the next market to sell it.

“What a fool is this fellow,” says a Man upon the road, “to be trudging it on foot with his son, that his Ass may go light.” The old Man, hearing this, set his boy upon the Ass, and went whistling by the side of him.

“Why, Sirrah,” cries a second Man to the Boy, “is it fit for you to be riding while your poor father is walk-ing on foot?” The father, upon hearing this re-buke, took down

his boy from the Ass and mount-ed him himself.

“Do you see,” said a third, “how the lazy old knave rides along with his beast, while his poor little Boy is almost crippled with walking!” The old Man no sooner heard this than he took up his son behind him.

“Pray, honest friend,” said a fourth, “is that Ass your own?”

“Yes,” says the Man.

“One would not have thought so,” replied the other, “by your loading him so shamefully. You and your son are better able to carry the poor beast than he you.”

“Anything to please;” so he and his son alighted, tied the legs of the Ass together, and passing a pole through the knot, tried to carry him upon their shoulders over the bridge that led to the town. This was so amusing a sight that the people ran in crowds to look at it.

At last the Ass burst the cords asunder, slipped from the pole, and tumbled into the river.

The poor old Man made the best of his way home, ashamed and vexed that, by trying to please everybody, he had pleased nobody, and lost his Ass into the bargain.

THE LION AND THE LAMB.

“LAMB, defend thyself or die!” roared King Lion.

“Oh, dear! I have nought where-with to defend myself but my in-no-cence,” said the Lamb, meek-ly.

“For thy innocence I care not a straw.”

“Well then, do thy worst, O King of Beasts!”

Then, said the Lion, “I am pleased, O Lamb, with thy pious mind! Live: for behold, I repent me of my fury. His blood is far from noble who would injure innocence. Go, pious Lamb, go, and may the same shield ever pro-tect you!”

THE DOG AND THE WOLF.

A LEAN, half-starv'd Wolf one night met with a fat, sleek Watch-dog.

"You are looking ex-treme-ly well, Mr. Mastiff," said the Wolf; "tell me how it comes about that you live so much better than I."

"Oh!" said the Dog, "as to that, you may live just as well, if you choose."

"You don't say so! Well, how is that?"

"All you have to do is to watch the house o'nights, and keep off the thieves."

"Good! I shall be happy to do anything for a crust of bread in these hard times."

Well, on they jogged; and by and by the Wolf spied a mark round the Dog's neck.

Mr. Seegrim could not make it out; so he said to his friend:—

"May I ask how you came to have that mark on your neck, Mr. Mastiff?"

"Foh! that's nothing."

"But, pray, tell me, there's a good fellow."

“ Well, then,” said the Dog, “ the fact is, I am not a chicken, as you know well enough; so in case I should bite gentle-folks, I am chained up all day. However, I sleep the day-light away, except when I am eating the tit-bits from my master’s table. Then I’m let loose fresh for my night rambles, and left at large. Hulloo! What’s the matter?”

“ Much obliged to you all the same, Mr. Mastiff. Let me be free, — with potatoes and salt, if you will; but still leave me my freedom.”



THE COWHERD.

A BOY was herding a Cow on a meadow, close to a garden. There grew *there* a cherry tree, laden with nice ripe cherries. Well, the Boy for-got the Cow, and climbed the tree to feast himself.

So the Cow broke through the hedge of

the garden, ate what she liked best, and trod the flowers under foot.

The boy shortly saw this; and he became very angry. He jump'd down from the tree, seized a large stick, and gave the Cow a terrible beating.

Now his Father had seen the whole affair. So he came to the Boy, and said:—

“Who should have the stick, thou or the Cow? She knows no better. Thou dost. Art thou, then, better than she? Tell me that.”

The blush, which spread over the little Boy's cheeks, be-trayed his sense of shame.*



THE LITTLE TREE.

A FATHER was going to sail to a far country across the sea. Before starting, he called his dear family around him. The Father held a young tree in his hand, and they all planted it together.

* Krummacher.

Then said the Father:—“When you look on this tree, you will think of me, far away. Ere it shall have bloomed thrice, I shall be with you again, if God wills it.”

Thus spoke the Father, and departed.

The first season the tree blossomed sweet and fair.

But, while the Father was at sea, a ter-ri-fic storm arose. The ship was thrown on the rocks; and he perished in the waves.

The children, hearing the sad tidings, wept and grieved very bitterly. Again the tree put forth its pretty blossoms, so they stood round it weeping and wailing.

A good man, and an old friend, came to the children and said, “Listen to me, my dears! That tree has now lost its meaning. The very sight of it pains you, and well it may. Let me, therefore, take it away, that your tears may not keep flowing afresh, when you gaze on it.”

Then cried the children, one and all, “No! no! Let us keep the tree. Its bloom, it is

true, means only grief to us. But are not our tears, tears of love for a dearly beloved Father?" *

THE PRODIGAL SON.

A CERTAIN man had two sons. The younger of them said to his father,—“Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me.” And he divided unto them his living.

Not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country; and there wasted his substance in riotous living.

When he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to a cit-iz-en of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.

He would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him.

When he *came* to himself, he said,—How

* Krummacher.

many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him:—"Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants."

And he arose and came to his father. But, when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

And the son said unto him:—"Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son."

But the father said to his servants:—"Bring forth the best robe and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet; and bring hither the fatted calf and kill it; and let us eat and be merry: for this, my son, was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found."

And they began to be merry.*

* Luke xv.

SONG OF THE FAIRY QUEEN.

COME follow, follow me,
Ye fairy elves that be,
Light tripping o'er the green,
Come follow, Mab, your queen.
Hand in hand we dance around,
For this place is fairy ground.

When mortals are at rest,
And snoring in their nest
Unheard and un-espied
Through keyholes we do glide;
Over tables, stools, and shelves,
We trip it with our fairy elves.

And if the house is swept,
And from uncleanness kept,
We praise the house-hold maid,
And surely she is paid:
For every night before we go
We drop a sixpence in her shoe.

Then o'er a mushroom's head
Our table cloth we spread;
A grain of rye or wheat
The diet that we eat;
Pearly drops of dew we drink,
In acorn cups fill'd to the brink.

The grass-hopper, gnat, and fly
Serve for our min-strelsy;
Grace said, we dance awhile,
And so the time beguile;
And if the moon doth hide her head,
The glow-worm lights us home to bed.



THE PET CANARY.

A LITTLE girl called Lizzy had a charming Canary. He was a very pretty bird — of a bright yellow color, and with a black crest. He sang and warbled. too, from morning to night.

Lizzy gave him seeds and nice fresh chick-weed for food, and spring water for drink.

A happy pair was Lizzy and her feather'd Pet. You cannot think how kind they were to each other.

But, oh dear! all of a sudden Pet grew sick, and began to pine away. At last, one morning, when little Lizzy had taken water to Pet, there he lay, at the bottom of his cage,—*dead.*

Lizzy burst into a flood of tears. She cried and sobbed as if her little heart would break.

Well, Lizzy's Mother bought her a new bird. It was just as pretty as Pet, perhaps prettier. It sang as sweetly too, if possible more sweetly, than Pet. There he frisked about in the cage that, alas! was Pet's no more.

But poor Lizzy wept all the more when she saw the stranger. Lizzy's Mother said to her kindly:—

“My dear child, what are you still crying for? Your tears will not bring Pet back again. Here is another bird for you, just as good, if not better.”

Then said Lizzy,—“Dear Mother, I cry

because I did wrong to Pet. I did not behave to him as I ought. And oh! now he is dead, what am I to do?"

"My dear," said her Mother, "you seemed always to take the greatest care of Pet."

"Oh no!" said Lizzy. "Shortly before he died, I ate the bit of sugar you gave me for him. Oh dear! oh dear!"

The Mother looked on Lizzy in pity, *not* in anger. For she thought to herself, such would be the feelings of a daughter at the grave of a dear dead mother.*



THE EWE LAMB.

THE Lord sent Nathan unto David, and he came unto him and said unto him; — "There were two men in one city, the one was rich and the other poor.

"The rich man had exceeding many flocks

* Krummacher.

and herds ; but the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up.

“ It grew up together with him and with his children ; and it did eat of his own meat, and drink of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter.

“ And there came a traveller unto the rich man ; and he spared to take of his own flock, and of his own herd, to dress for the way-faring man that was come unto him : but took the poor man’s lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him.”

And David’s anger was greatly kindled against the man ; and he said to Nathan, — “ As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die. And he shall restore the lamb four-fold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity.”*



* 2 Samuel, xii. 5, 6.

THE ELDER-BRANCH.

A SPORTS-MAN and his son were out in the country, shooting. By and by they found that a brook parted them. The Boy wanted to rejoin his father, but the brook was wide.

Presently he cut a branch from the nearest bush. Putting the one end in the middle of the water, he leaned upon the other, and gave a spring.

But the staff was a piece of an elder tree, which, you know, is not solid inside. It broke, and the boy fell head-long into the water.

A Shepherd, who noticed the whole affair, ran to the spot. But the Boy needed no help, because he could swim well. Puffing the water out of his mouth, he swam laughing to the other side.

Then said the Shepherd to the Sportsman:—
“You seem to have taught your son many things; but one thing you have forgotten. *Why have you not taught him to see to*

the innermost parts of a thing before he trusts to it? If he had seen the soft pith of that stick, he would not have relied on the deceiving bark."

"My friend," replied the Sportsman, "I have taught my boy to use his eyes and his strength. As to the rest, I leave all to time. Time may teach him suspicion." *

KITTY AND MOUSIE.

ONCE there was a little Kitty
Whiter than snow ;
In a barn he used to frolic
Long time ago.

In the barn a little Mousie
Ran to and fro ,
For she heard the Kitty coming,
Long time ago.

* Krummacher.

Two black eyes had little Kitty,
Black as a sloe ;
And they spied the little Mousie,
Long time ago.

Four soft paws had little Kitty,
Paws soft as dough,
And they caught the little Mousie
Long time ago.

Nine pearl teeth had little Kitty,
All in a row ;
And they bit the little Mousie
Long time ago.

When the teeth bit little Mousie,
Mousie cried out " Oh ! "
But she got away from Kitty,
Long time ago.*

—♦—

* Little Susy's Six Birthdays.

MY PONY.

Hop, hop, hop!

Go and never stop;

Where 'tis smooth and where 'tis stony,

Trudge along my little pony,

Go and never stop,

Hop, hop, hop, hop, hop!

Hey, hey, hey!

Go along, I say;

Don't you kick and don't you stumble,

Don't you tire and don't you grumble;

Go along, I say;

Hey, hey, hey, hey, hey!

Jump, jump, jump!

Don't you hit that stump!

For I will not cease to ride you

Till I further yet have tried you:

Don't you hit that stump,

Jump, jump, jump, jump, jump!

Tramp, tramp, tramp!

Make your feet now stamp,

On the high-way no one faster;

But take care! don't throw your master!

Make your feet now stamp!

Tramp, tramp, tramp, tramp, tramp!

THE UNFRUITFUL TREE.


THERE was once a man, who had a brother, a clever gardener ; and he went to pay him a visit. He was de-light-ed with the flowers and the fine fruit-ful trees.

The brother said : — “ I make you a present of the best tree in all my garden. Such a tree no one has ever seen. It will be the joy of your children and your children’s children.”

The man thank-ful-ly ac-cepted the offer, and had the tree taken home.

But he didn’t know at all where to plant the tree. He said to himself : — “ If I plant it on that hill, the wind will be sure to shake down the fruit and spoil it. If I put it here, so close to the road-side, the people will help them-selves ; or, if I plant it here, close by my door, it will be within reach of my own children and servants.”

Nobody was ever so puzzled as this man
with his tree



At last he fixed on a spot behind his barn, and on the north side. "Thieves," thought he, "will never dream of finding it here." So he chuckled with delight.

The first season came, but the tree bore no fruit. The second autumn passed, and it was barren as before.

Then the man sent for his brother, the gardener, and said: — "Look here! A nice tree you have given me, indeed! You do not call that a fruit tree which bears nothing but leaves. Do you?"

The gardener, when he saw where it was planted, laughed out-right. "No wonder," said he; "you have put the tree ex-act-ly in the spot which light and warmth never reach. It is open to the north wind, and under the shadow of your ugly barn. No, brother! the blossom will only spring from noble sources. But you, with your mean and suspecting heart, have robbed it of the means of growth.*

* Krummacher.

THE TRUSTY CHILDREN.

JOHN and Jane were in the country with their mother. Their father had gone a very long journey, and they all very much wanted to hear that he had got there safe.

One night their Mother said to John and Jane, "I expect a letter from your father; you shall get up early in the morning, and go to the post-office to fetch it."

It was two or three miles from their house to the town where the letters were left; but the children were very glad to go. John had got a sixpence, which was given him to buy a little kite, and Jane had sixpence to buy a doll.

They asked their Mother if they might buy the kite and doll when they went to the town. She said they might; but that she wished them to make haste back.

As they went along, John put his hand into *his pocket* to feel if the money was safe. He

could only find a shilling that his Mother had given him to pay for the letter. His own sixpence was gone.

John felt again, and found a little hole at the bottom of his pocket. He was very sorry, for he wished to have a kite. Jane felt for her sixpence, and found it safe. They looked about for a minute or two, but could not find the lost sixpence. Then they said, "We had better go on, for Mother told us to make haste; she will expect us back, and want to see the letter."

John said he must do without his kite, and Jane said she would buy a doll that cost but threepence, and give him half her money.

When they got to the post-office, they found the letter, and they said, — "Let us make haste back, and not stay to buy anything now, Mother will be so glad to have the letter." So they walked back as fast as they could.

When they got almost home, Jane said, "What is that shining in the grass?" and *they ran and stooped down, and found that*

it was John's own sixpence ; they both of them jumped for joy.

When they got home the letter was opened, and they heard that their dear father was quite well, and sent his love to them. Their Mother said she must send a letter back, and if they were not tired they might go in the evening and carry it to the post-office.

. They were very glad to do this, and Jane mended the hole in her brother's pocket ; so they carried their money safely, and bought the kite and the doll.*



* Fables and True Stories.

THE FOUR APPLES.

ONCE on a time there lived four men. They were all well-to-do ; and they lived together like good brothers. But one day they lost all their money : so they became as poor as rats.

Away they went to a Wise Man, and told him all about their bad luck. The Wise Man had pity on them. So he gave each one a wonderful apple ; then said he to the young men : —

“ Each of you put an apple on his head, and go his way. Where the ball drops, *there* stop and dig. Whatever you turn over with your spade, take it, and be thankful.”

The four friends went their ways, as the Wise Man had told them.

They had just gone a mile, when an apple dropped from one of their heads. The man dug with his spade, and found Copper.

“ Good ! ” said he. “ *A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.* Stay here with me if

you like. We can all dig together, and welcome."

No! The others guessed they would do better; so away they went, and left him.

Well, in a short time, the second man's apple fell to the ground. He dug with his spade; and found whole cart-loads of Silver.

"Better still!" said he. "Stay here if you like, and share my silver."

No! the other two thought they would try their luck; so away they went and left him.

On they walked for some time; and at last the third man's apple dropt from his head. Well, he dug the spot with his spade; and, lo! it was a mine of Gold.

"Best of all!" he cried. "Stay here if you like. You may go halves with me, and welcome."

No! The fourth man thanked him; but declined the offer. Perhaps he might find a store of diamonds. Why *should* he stay? So away he went cheer-i-ly.

By-and-by down dropt his apple too. Well,

he dug and he delved with his spade — on this side and on that. And at last he found — iron. The Wise Man knew better than he which was of greater worth, Diamond or Iron. What think you? *

THE OLD GRANDFATHER AND HIS GRANDCHILD.

THERE was once a very old Man whose eyes were dim, ears deaf, and legs tottering. When he was at table, he could hardly hold his spoon, so much did his hand shake. So he spilt his soup on the table-cloth.

All this an-noyed the son and his wife, and they made him sit in a corner behind the stove. There he ate his food from an earthen-ware dish; and he had not always too much to eat, as you may guess.

Well, one day his tremb-ling hands could not hold the dish; it fell on the floor, and broke.

His son and his son's wife, at once fell into a passion, and spoke bitterly to the poor old man. His only answer was a deep, heavy sigh.

They then bought him a wooden bowl, which he had to take his meals out of.

Well, the little Grandson, a child of about four years old, began to get together little bits of wood.

"What are you doing with those pieces of wood?" asked his Father.

The child said:—"I am going to make a little trough for Father and Mother to eat out of when I'm a man."

The parents looked at each other for a moment, and then burst into tears.

From that moment the Grandfather had his old place at the table; and his children bore with all the petty weaknesses of age.*



* Grimm.

THE HUNGRY ARABIAN.

AN Arabian had lost his way in the desert. Two days he had wandered about without finding anything to eat, and was in danger of per-ish-ing of hunger. Suddenly he fell in with one of those pools of water at which travellers water their camels, and near it there lay upon the sand a little leath-ern bag.

Heaven be praised, said he, after he had lifted it up, and felt its weight. I believe it contains either dates or nuts; and what a delightful treat they will be! How they will refresh and comfort me!

So saying, and filled with glowing hopes he opened the bag, but, on beholding its contents, he exclaimed, with a melan-choly sigh,—“Alas! alas! they are only pearls.”*



* Herder.

THE WATER DROP.

A DROP of rain, one solitary drop, fell from a cloud into the sea, and was swallowed by the enormous waste of waters, in the bosom of the Atlantic. Lost in the depths of the ocean, the little Drop said to itself, "Ah! what a tiny thing am I in this great world of water!"

It happened that just at this moment an oyster opened its shelly mouth, and swallowed the water Drop. It lay a long time in its pearly home. By degrees it ripened into a beautiful pearl.

At length it was found by a diver, and after many a change it became the gem which glitters in the Persian crown!

Repine not, humble one, wherever thy lot is cast, and however lowly it may be. Thou knowest not what glory there is yet in store for thee.*



* Gittermaun.

THE YOUNG TREE.

A BOY once saw his Father plant the shoot of a wild apple tree. "What are you doing with that ugly thing, Father?"

"Not so fast, my boy. Do you know what this ugly thing, as you call it, is?"

"Of course I do!" re-plied the boy.

"Indeed you can see its outside, but what lies hid in it you *cannot* see. This little shoot may yet become a high and beautiful tree. At present it is young and tender; we must feed it, that it may grow strong."

By-and-by William saw his Father once more at the tree. He was driving a stake into the ground, and fastening the tiny tree to it.

"Why are you doing that, Father?"

"I do so, my son, that the wind may not bend it or throw it down. We must train and support it, that it may grow up straight."

Then he pruned the little tree; and loosened the earth about it, to give its roots air

and moist-ure. Then he fenced it round with thorns to keep off the cattle, as they would eat the twigs or de-stroy the bark.

Next spring William again stood at the tree. His Father cut a twig as a graft from a good fruit tree. Then with his knife he lopped off, in one slice, the top of the tiny tree, just where the branches part. Now it was a bare stem.

“Oh! what a pity,” cried William. “Now all your trouble goes for nothing.” The Father smiled, and forth-with bound or grafted the new twig on the stem before him.

As they walked away, the Father said:—
“If it had remained in the forest, it would have become crooked and rugged, but I guided its growth; *now* it is straight. I have given it a nobler graft, that it may ex-pend its little virtue and strength to some purpose.”

Soon the little tree was covered with blossom, and in autumn it was weighed down *with golden apples.*

“What think you of the tree, now?” asked William’s Father.

“Oh! I think it is a dear, grateful little tree!”

“Well, henceforth it is yours, and may you grow like it, my boy!”*



THE VINEYARD.

THE kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, who went out early in the morning to hire laborers into his vineyard.

And when he had agreed with the laborers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard.

And he sent out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the market-place.

And said unto them: Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way.

Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise.

* Krummacher.

And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle?

They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, — Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive.

So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, — Call the laborers and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first.

And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny.

But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny.

And when they had received it, they murmured against the good man of the house,

Saying, these last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, who have borne the burden and heat of the day.

But he answered one of them, and said,
Friend, I do thee no wrong; didst thou not
agree with me for a penny?

Take that which is thine, and go thy way; I
will give unto this last even as unto thee.

Is it not lawful for me to do what I will
with my own? Is thine eye evil because I
am good? *



THE OLD KITCHEN CLOCK.

LISTEN to the Kitchen Clock!

To itself it ever talks,

From its place it never walks;

“Tick-tock — tick-tock.”

Tell me what it says.

“I’m a very patient Clock,

Never moved by hope or fear,

Though I’ve stood for many a year;

Tick-tock — tick-tock.”

That is what it says.

* Matt. xx.

“ I’m a very truthful Clock :

People say about the place,

Truth is written on my face ,

Tick-tock — tick-tock.”

That is what it says.

“ I’m a very active Clock,

For I go while you’re asleep,

Though you never take a peep ;

Tick-tock — tick-tock.”

That is what it says.

“ I’m a most obliging Clock :

If you wish to hear me strike,

You may do it when you like ;

Tick-tock — tick-tock.”

That is what it says.

What a talkative old Clock !

Let us see what it will do

When the pointer reaches two ;

“ Ding — Ding ” — “ tick-tock.”

That is what it says.*

THE STOLEN PEACHES.

CHARLIE was the son of pious and kind parents. It was his birth-day, and a beautiful autumn day it was. His parents loaded him with presents, and allowed him to bring some of his school-fellows to play with him.

They played about in the garden. There Charlie had a little plot of his own, rich with flowers and fruit. On the opposite wall there grew a peach tree, which was *not* his but his father's.

The peaches were ripe, and a ruddy bloom blushed through their downy skin. What more delightful ! So thought the boys, at any-rate.

"Why not just taste them?" said they to Charlie. "There's no harm in it. Besides, is this not your birth-day? Surely you can do as you like once a year at least."

"No!" said Charlie; "I am for-bid-den to touch those peaches. That's enough. Take what you like from my own plot, and welcome."

Then said the eldest of them, "Very likely Charlie is quite right. However, let us pluck the peaches, and perhaps he will help us to eat them."

So Charlie at last agreed to this, and he was, indeed, fain to share the feast.

THE REPENTANCE.

When the peaches were all eaten, and the boys gone, Charlie began to feel he had done wrong. He stayed in the garden alone and wretched. He was never so sad and miserable all his life long.

At last his father came into the garden, and called out, "Charlie! Charlie!"

Charlie stood at the end of the garden, a picture of woe. His father went to him; and in passing the peach-tree, he saw what had been done. His face grew cloudy and dark.

Then said his father, "Is this your birthday, and is this the return you make us for all our care and kind-ness?"

Charlie was dumb.

"Hence-forth the garden is locked to you," said his father. He then led him into the house, and turned coldly away.

Charlie went off to bed, but not to sleep. No! he turned and tossed, this way and that. He didn't have a wink of sleep the whole night.

THE FORGIVENESS.

Next morning Charlie was pale and down-cast. His Mother had pity on him. So she said to her husband:—"Charlie repents. But he thinks the 'locked garden' means that you have locked your heart against him."

"He is right," was the reply; "I *have* locked my heart against him."

"Heigh-ho!" sighed the mother, "he has begun the new year of his life with sorrow."

"That it may become more joyful, let us hope," remarked the Father.

By-and-by the Mother said:—"I fear Charlie will doubt our love for him."

"*Not so.* His sense of guilt will not suffer

him to throw the blame on us. Till now he always had our love; hence-forth he will learn to prize it by winning it back again."

The following morning Charlie came down to breakfast calmly and cheer-fully. He bore in his hand a basket, full of all the toys and the other presents his parents had given him.

"What do you mean by this?" asked his father. Charlie answered: — "These I give back to you, as I am unworthy of them." Then the Father unlocked his heart, and all was happiness as before.*

THE fly about the candle gay,
Buzzes with thoughtless hum;
But short, alas, his giddy play!
His pleasure proves his doom.

The child in such simplicity,
About the bee-hive clings,
And with one drop of honey
Receives a thousand stings.

THE LION AND THE FOX.

IN a large desert there once lived a Lion, who had a Monkey as his servant. It fell out that the Lion had to leave home for some time. So he left the Monkey in charge of his den.

By-and-by there came a Fox to the lair. He sniffed about him here and there and every-where. At last he made up his mind that this was just the spot for him.

The Monkey broke out upon him, snarling, "Go about your business, you impudent Reynard! Don't you know this is the palace of my master, King Lion? Be off with you!"

No! the Fox wouldn't stir a step. He said he had as good a right to the place as any beast alive. So the Monkey held his tongue.

But Goody Reynard said to her spouse:—
"It is hardly safe to stay here, I think. To ruffle the temper of a Lion is no small matter."

you know. Come! let us keep out of harm's way."

"Oho! old woman, don't put yourself in a flurry about nothing. Wait till the Lion comes I shall serve him a trick, *that* I shall."

THE TRICK NAUGHTY REYNARD PLAYED.

In a day or two the news reached them that King Lion was coming. Well, the Monkey went to meet his master, and told him all.

"Oh, Monkey!" growled King Lion, "it surely can't be a Fox. It must be some large savage beast. How could a puny thing dare to enter house of mine without leave? Ask any man of sense, and he will tell you that."

"As sure as I am standing here," chattered the Monkey, "it's a Fox, and nothing but a Fox."

"Stuff and nonsense! you fussy little brat!"

Meanwhile, Mr. Reynard had told his wife that as soon as the Lion came near enough *to hear, she was to pinch the children and*

make them cry. Then he should say, "why are these brats making such a fuss?" When her reply was to be:—"They *will* have fresh lion meat every day, and I have none to give them."

The Lion approach'd. The squalling of the youthful Reynards began. "Why are those bother-some brats howling so?" asked Papa. "They *will* have fresh lion meat every day, and I have none to give them, *that's* the fact," said Mamma, as she had been bid.

Then said the cunning Reynard, coaxingly, "Have patience a little, my dears. You shall soon have enough and to spare. A King Lion, I'm told, is expected here to-day; and we shall make no bones of him, shall we, my pets?"

The royal Lion heard this, and couldn't think what to make of it. So he took to his heels.

TRUTH LASTS LONGEST.

"Didn't I tell you?" said he to the Monkey, as he stopped to draw a breath.

“didn’t I tell you it must be no joke of a beast?”

“Good!” cried the vexed Monkey, “if you don’t like to believe my word, I can’t help it. I only tell you again that it’s a Fox; he only talks big to frighten you.”

“Ho! ho! That’s the way the wind blows! Eh?” said the Lion; and back he went towards the den.

As he approach’d, the screaming for lion food was heard as before. Reynard feigned to quiet his little family; and, indeed, he played his part to perfection. But all to no purpose; for King Lion entering at that moment, pounc’d upon the wicked Fox; tore him in pieces, and ate him up.

As to Dame Reynard and the little puppies, away they scamper’d as fast as their legs could carry them; and glad they were to escape with whole skins, I can tell you.

The faithful Monkey received a royal embrace; and ever after was trusted as he *de served*. *

NIGHT.

THE glorious sun is set in the west ; the night dews fall ; and the air, which was sul-try, becomes cool.

The flowers fold up their colored leaves ; they fold themselves up, and hang their heads on the slender stalk.

The chickens are gathered under the wing of the hen, and are at rest ; the hen herself is at rest also.

The little birds have ceased their warb-ling, they are asleep on the boughs, each one with his head behind his wing.

There is no murmur of bees around the hive, or among the honeyed wood-bines : they have done their work, and lie close in their waxen cell.

The sheep rest upon their soft fleeces, and their loud bleating is no more heard amongst the hills.

There is no sound of a number of voices, or

of children at play, or of the trampling of busy feet, and of people hurry-ing to and fro.

The smith's hammer is not heard upon the anvil ; nor the harsh saw of the carpenter.

All men are stretched on their quiet beds : and the child sleeps upon the breast of its mother.

Darkness is spread over the skies, and darkness is upon the ground : every eye is shut, and every hand is still.

Who takes care of all people when they are sunk in sleep ; when they cannot defend themselves, nor see if danger is approaching ?

There is an eye that never sleeps : there is an eye that sees in dark night as well as in the bright sunshine.

When there is no light in the sun, nor of the moon ; when there is no lamp in the house, nor any little star twinkling through the thick clouds ; that eye sees everywhere, in all places, and watcheth continually over all the families of the earth.

The eye that sleeps not is God's: his hand is always stretched out over us.

He made sleep to refresh us when we are weary: he made night that we might sleep in quiet.

Let his praise be in our hearts when we lie down.*



MORNING.

COME, let us go forth into the fields: let us see how the flowers spring; let us listen to the warbling of the birds, and sport ourselves upon the new grass.

The winter is over and gone, the buds come out upon the trees, the crimson blossoms of the peach and nec-ta-rine are seen, and the green-leaves sprout.

The hedges are bordered with tufts of prim-roses, and yellow cow-slips, that hang down their heads; and the blue violet lies hid beneath the shade.

* Mrs. Barbauld.

The young gos-lings are running upon the green; they are just hatched, their bodies are covered with yellow down; the old ones hiss with anger if any one comes near.

The hen sits upon her nest of straw, she watches patiently the full time, then she carefully breaks the shell, and the young chickens come out.

The lambs just dropped are in the field, they totter by the side of their dams; their young limbs can hardly support their weight.

If you fall, little lambs, you will not be hurt; there is spread under you a carpet of soft grass; it is spread for you.

The butterflies flutter from bush to bush, and open their wings to the warm sun.

The young animals of every kind are sporting about; they feel themselves happy; they are glad to be alive,—they thank him that has made them alive.

They may thank him in their hearts, but we can thank him with our tongues: we are better *than they*, and can praise him better.

The birds can warble and the young lambs can bleat ; but we can open our lips in his praise, we can speak of all his goodness.

Therefore we will thank him for ourselves, and we will thank him for those who cannot speak.

Let his praise be on our lips when we awake. *



KING LION AND THE MICE.

ONCE on a time there lived a Lion in the desert. He was quite worn out with age. His teeth were all broken and rotten. *Chew* he could not.

It was not often he could catch a nice little fawn or hare for his dinner ; but when he *did* fall in with one, he made the best of it, as you may guess.

But, as I told you, the Lion couldn't chew his food at all. So he had to fall a-sleep,

with scraps of the tough meat hang-ing out of his mouth.

Now, there were a great many tiny Mice in the desert; and they were as hungry as Mice can be. So they used to pick and gnaw the meat out of the Lion's mouth.

This was all very fine for the wee Mice; but the big Lion didn't like it. He didn't mind the Mice coming when he was ly-ing a-wake; but the naugh-ty little tooth-picks *would* al-ways come when he was a-sleep. Then, they awoke him with their tug-ging and gnawing. *That* he could not and *would* not bear any longer.

TOM CAT AND THE MICE.

Well, King Lion called a Fox, and asked him what he had better do.

"Oh!" said Reynard, "my friend Tom Cat is your man. Order him to keep a sharp look-out. He will be only too hap-py to serve you — that I'm sure of."

Tom Cat was sent for ac-cord-ing-ly.



Tom Cat took his post at the door of King Lion's palace, and walked to and fro, just like a soldier. By and by back came the Mice. When they saw Tom's whisk-ers, they gently took their tails between their legs, and made off in as nice a hurry scurry as you ever saw.

King Lion was vast-ly pleased with Tom Cat's care-ful-ness. And, indeed, he *seemed* to do his work bravely.

Now, Tom did not kill any of the Mice;—“For if I make away with them, I shall be of no use here. I am not the fool to throw away a good place. No! indeed.” That was what Tom said to himself, as he switched his sword of a tail about.

All this while, Tom was starving himself, you know. At last he could bear his hunger no longer. So one day, he steps up to King Lion, and says:—“Sire, may I have a holiday to-mor-row, please?”

Then King Lion bowed his heavy head, saying:—“*Sir-rah!* You may go.”

Tom went far away; and made up for lost

time, as you may guess. He hunted and ate the far away Mice, from morn-ing to night.

Mean-while, the wee Mice, in greater numbers than ever, came swarming about the Lion's mouth. The King of Beasts was mad with rage. Ha! ha! He saw into the whole affair in a twinkling; so he made up his mind to pay off his faithless servant.

Next morning back came Tom Cat, looking as nice and sleek as he really was. But King Lion would have nothing to say to him, and turned him about his business.*



THE POOR MATCH GIRL.

It was New Year's Eve, and a cold, snowy evening. A poor little girl walked along the street with naked feet, numb with cold. She carried in her hand a basketful of matches. These she had been trying all day to sell, but in vain: no one had bought a single box.

The snow fell fast upon her pretty yellow

* Nakshabi.

hair and her bare neck; but she did not mind *that*. She looked sadly at the bright lights which shone from every window as she passed along. She could smell the nice roast goose, and she longed to taste it. It was New Year's Eve!

Wearied and faint, she laid herself down in a corner of the street, and drew her little legs under her to keep herself warm. She could not go home, for her father would scold her for not having sold any matches. Even if she were there, she would still be cold, for the house was but poorly furnished, and the wind whistled through many a chink in the roof and walls.

She thought she would try and warm her cold fingers by lighting one of the matches. She drew one out, struck it against the wall, and presently a bright clear flame streamed from it, as from a lighted candle.

The little girl looked at the flame, and she saw before her a fine supper tidily laid out, and a pretty iron stove with a nice fire in it! She

stretched out her feet to warm them — when, lo! the match went out. In a moment the feast and the fire vanished. There she sat in the cold night, with the burnt match in her hand.

THE SECOND MATCH.

The little girl drew another match, and as soon as it struck a light, she saw a most beautiful Christmas tree, much larger and more splendid than any she had ever seen before. A vast number of lighted candles hung among the branches; and a number of pretty pictures met her eyes. The girl lifted up her tiny hands in wonder at the sight; but again the match fell. At the same moment one of the blazing candles shot through the sky, like a falling star, and fell at her feet. "Now some one dies," cried she. For she had been told by her good old grandmother, that when a star falls a soul returns to God.

Again she struck; and, behold, a light shone *round about her*, and in the midst of it stood

her kind grandmother. She looked calmly and smilingly upon her.

“Dear grandmother,” said she, “take me, oh take me! You will be gone from me when the match goes out, like the nice supper, the warm fire, and the Christmas tree.”

Saying this, she struck all the rest of the matches at once, which made a light around her almost like day. And now the good grandmother smiled still more sweetly upon her; she lifted her up in her arms, and they soared together, far, far away, where there was no longer any cold, or hunger, or pain.

But the poor little match-girl was still in the corner of the street, in the cold New Year's morning. She was frozen to death, and a bundle of burnt matches lay beside her. People said, “She had been trying to warm herself, poor thing!” But they knew not what glorious things she had seen; they knew not into what joys she had entered — nor how happy she was on this festival of the New Year.*

PETER SIMPLE OF THE HILL-SIDE.

ONCE on a time there was a man whose name was Peter Simple. He had a farm which lay far away upon a hill-side; and so they called him Peter Simple of the Hill-Side.

Now, you must know this man and his good wife lived very happily together. Whatever the husband did, the wife thought there was nothing like it in the world.

Well, one day his wife said to her good man : — “Do you know, dear, I think we ought to take one of our cows to town to sell it; *that’s* what I think. Such well-to-do people, as we are, ought to have ready money like the rest of the world. Besides, I don’t know what we want with more than one cow.”

Now, Peter thought his wife talked right good sense, so he set off at once with the cow to sell her. But when he got to the town, there was nobody who would buy his cow.

“Well! well! never mind,” said Peter. “*At the worst*, I can only go back home

again with my cow. I've both stable and hay for her, I should think, and the road is no farther out than in." And with that he began to trudge home with his cow.

But when he had gone a bit of the way, a man met him who had a horse to sell. Now, Peter thought it better to have a horse than a cow; so he bargained with the man.

A little farther on he met a man walking along and driving a fat pig before him. Peter thought it better to have a fat pig than a horse; so he bargained with the man.

After that he went a little further, and a man met him with a goat. So he thought it better to have a goat than a pig, and he bargained with the man that owned the goat.

Then he went on a good bit till he met a man who had a sheep, and he bargained with him too, for he thought it always better to have a sheep than a goat.

By-and-by he met a man with a goose and he bargained away the sheep for the goose.

Then he went on till the day was far spent, and he began to get very hungry. So he sold the goose for a shilling, and bought food with the money. "For," thought Peter, "it is always better to save one's life than to have a goose."

After that he went on home.

WHAT GOODY SIMPLE THOUGHT OF THE NICE
BARGAINS.

"Good evening!" said Peter of the Hill-side.

"Good evening!" said the good wife. "Oh! is that you? I'm right glad to see you back again."

Yes! it was he. So the wife asked how things had gone with him in town.

"Oh! only so-so," answered Peter, "not much to boast of. When I got to the town there was no one who would buy the cow, so you must know I bargained it away for a horse.

"For a horse!" said his wife; "well, that is

good of you. Thanks with all my heart. We are so well-to-do that we may drive to church just as well as other people; and if we choose to keep a horse, we have a right to get one, I should think. So run out, child, and put up the horse."

"Ah!" said Peter, "but you see I've not got the horse after all; for when I got a bit farther on the road, I bargained it away for a pig."

"Think of that now!" said the wife; "you did just as I should have done myself. A thousand thanks. Now I can have a bit of bacon to set before people when they come to see me, *that* I can. What do we want with a horse? People would only say we had got so proud that we couldn't walk to church. Go out, child, and put up the pig in the sty."

"But I haven't got the pig either," said Peter; "for when I got a little farther on, I bargained it away for a milch goat."

"Dear me!" cried the wife, "how well you *manage* everything! Now I think it over,

what should I do with a pig? People would only point at us and say, — ‘Yonder they eat up all they have got,’ No! now I have got a goat, and I shall have milk and cheese, and keep the goat too. Run out, child, and put up the goat.”

“Nay, but I haven’t got the goat either,” said Peter, “for a little farther on I bargained it away, and got a fine sheep instead.”

“You don’t say so!” cried his wife; “why, you do everything to please me, just as if I had been with you. What do we want with a goat? If I had it I should lose half my time in climbing up the hills to get it down. No! if I have a sheep I shall have both wool, and clothing, and fresh meat in the house. Run out, child, and put up the sheep.”

“But I haven’t got the sheep any more than the rest,” said Peter; “for when I had gone a bit farther, I bargained it away for a goose.”

“Thank you! thank you! with all my heart,” cried his wife; “what should I do

with a sheep? I have no spinning-wheel, nor carding-comb, nor should I care to worry myself with cutting, and shaping, and sewing clothes. We can buy clothes now, as we have always done; and now I shall have roast-goose, which I have longed for so often; and, besides, down to stuff my little pillow with. Run out, child, and put up the goose."

"But, after all, I haven't got the goose," said Peter; "for when I had gone a bit farther, I got as hungry as a hunter; so I was forced to sell the goose for a shilling, for fear I should starve."

"Now, it's a mercy you did so!" cried his wife. "All you do is just after my own heart. Heaven be thanked that I have got you safe back again,—*you*, who do everything so well that I want neither goat nor goose; neither pigs nor kine." *



LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD.

FAR away in the heart of the country, near a pleasant village, there once lived a little girl. She was one of the prettiest and best children you ever saw.

Her Mother loved her dearly, and, as to her grandmother, she was doating-ly fond of her. Grandma had given her darling a little hood of red vel-vet, and this became her so nicely that the folks of the country-side always called her by the name of Little Red Riding Hood.

Well, one day her mother baked a batch of cakes, and she said to Red Riding Hood:—

“I hear your poor Grandma has been ailing; so I want you to go like a good child to see if she is any better. Take this cake and a pot of butter with you.”

Little Red Riding Hood, who was a dear, willing child, put the things tidily into a basket, and off she set. The village where Grandma lived was on the other side of a *thick wood*.

On toddled Little Red Riding Hood; and, just as she came to the wood, what should she meet but a great ugly Wolf! The Wolf would fain have eaten her up there and then; but, you must know, there were some wood-cutters hard by, and they would soon have killed him in turn.

So the Wolf trot-ted up to the little girl and said as prettily as he could: — “Good morning, Little Red Riding Hood.”

“Good morning, Master Wolf,” said she.

“And where may you be going so early?” he asked.

“Oh! I’m going to Grandma’s,” said Little Red Riding Hood; for she thought there was no harm in being civil.

“Really! And what are you car-ry-ing in that basket, my pretty maid?” asked the Wolf, as he sniffed and sniffed at the lid.

“Oh!” said she, “only a cake and a pot of butter. For my Granny is ill, you know.”

“Dear me!” cried the Wolf. “And where *does she live*, pray?”

“Down by the mill, through the wood,” said she.

“Well, if that’s the case,” said the Wolf, “I don’t mind going and seeing her too. I shall go by the high-way; *you*, take the path through the wood; and let us see who will be there first.”

THE WOLF AND RIDING HOOD’S GRANDMA.

Very well. Away went the Wolf, and he made all haste, as you may guess. Sure enough, he stood at Granny’s cottage door in less than no time.

Thump, thump went the Wolf against the door.

“Who’s there?” sung out the Grandam from within.

Then said the Wolf, in a small, child-like voice:—“It’s only your grand-daughter, Little Red Riding Hood. And I’ve brought you a cake and a pot of butter from Mother.”

So Grandma, who was in bed, cried out:—

"Lift the latch, my dear, and the bolt will fall."

This the great ugly Wolf did, and in he went. Without another word, he fell on the poor old woman, and gobbled her up in a trice. Indeed, he was as hungry as a wolf can be. Next, he shut the door; put on the Grandam's night-cap and night-gown, and jumped into the bed. Then he drew the curtains quite close, and buried his head in the pil-low.

There lay the ugly Wolf, how merry you can't think, licking his lips, and waiting for Little Red Riding Hood.

HOW LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD GOT ALONG.

All this while Little Red Riding Hood was todd-ling through the wood.

Yes; she listen'd to the pretty birds singing on the green trees, and she was as pretty and blithe as they. On she went,—here plucking a wild flower, there picking the nice *black-berries* for her Grandma. Then down

she sat on a mossy bank to sort her flowers—red, blue, and yellow.

Well, by comes a wasp. He buzzes about, and at last drops on Red Riding Hood's posey of flowers.

"Sip away, my 'poor wispy waspy; and take as much honey as you like." That was what Little Red Riding Hood said.

The wasp hummed his thanks, as he flew from flower to flower. And when he had sipped his fill, away he sped.

Presently, up hopped a tiny tom-tit. So he began to peck with his wee bill at a black-berry. "Peck away, my little tom-tit, as much as you like,—only leave enough for Grandma and me," said Riding Hood.

"Tweat, tweat," answered the wee tom-tit.

So he ate his fill, and away he flew.

RED RIDING HOOD AND THE WATER-CRESS WOMAN.

Now Little Red Riding Hood thought it *was high time* to get on her way. She

picked up her basket, and set off. Then she came to a brook; and there, by the bank, she saw an old woman, bent almost double.

“What are you looking for, Goody?” said the little girl.

“For water-cresses, my pretty chick,” said she. “And a poor trade it is, let me tell you.”

Little Red Riding Hood gave Goody a bit of cake, saying:—“Sit down, Goody, and eat that. I can gather the water-cresses for you.”

Well, down sat the old crone on the bank, and ate her cake; while Riding Hood gathered a heap of water-cresses.

“There’s a dear!” said the poor old woman. “Now, if you meet the Green Huntsman on your way, tell him there’s game in the wind.”

That she would; and away went Red Riding Hood. But, presently turning round, she could not see the old woman. *She* had vanished like a shooting star.



RED RIDING HOOD AND THE GREEN HUNTSMAN.

So on toddled Little Red Riding Hood, prying all about for the Green Huntsman. But, no ! she could not see him anywhere.

At last, just as she was passing a still pool — so green you might have taken it for grass — she met the Huntsman. He was all green from top to toe ; and he was watching some birds wheeling about over his head.

“ Good morning, Master Huntsman,” said Little Riding Hood. “ The old Water-cress Woman sends her respects to you, and says there is game in the wind.”

The Huntsman nodded, but said nothing. He then bent his ear to the ground, and strung his bow with an arrow that was feather'd green.

Little Red Riding Hood toddled away, wondering what it all meant.



RIDING HOOD AND HER WOULD-BE GRANDMA.

In a short time the little girl got to her Grandma's cottage ; and she tapped at the door.

" Who's there ? " cried the Wolf from within, in a queer, gruff sort of voice.

" It's only your Grand-child, Red Riding Hood. And I've brought you a nice cake and a pot of fresh butter from mother."

Then said the Wolf more mildly : — " Lift the latch, my dear, and the bolt will fall." So Little Red Riding Hood did as she was bid, and in she went.

Now the Wolf hid his head under the bed-clothes, and said : — " Put the cake and the pot of butter in the cup-board, my pet, and then come and help me to get up."

Well, Little Red Riding Hood did as she was bid. Then she went and drew back the curtain, and folded down the bed-clothes. How it was her Grandma had got so ugly, she couldn't make out. So she said : —

"Dear me! Grandma, what long arms you've got!"

"The better to hug you, my dear."

"But, Grandma, what long ears you've got!"

"The better to hear you, my pet."

"But, Grandma, what great eyes you've got!"

"The better to see you, my child."

"But, Grandma, what big teeth you've got!"

"The better to eat you up," said the Wolf, as he got ready to make a spring on her.

But at that moment, a Wasp, that had followed Riding Hood into the cottage, stung the Wolf on the nose, so that he sneezed and sneezed again.

Then a little Tom-tit, that was sitting on the window-sill, when he heard this, said "Tweat, tweet!"

Then the Green Huntsman, who was outside, hearing the Tom-tit, let fly his arrow; and it struck the Wolf through the heart, and killed him on the spot.



THE FAIRY RING.

LET us laugh and let us sing,
Dancing in a merry ring;
We'll be fairies on the green,
Sporting round the fairy queen.

Like the seasons of the year,
Round we circle in a sphere:
I'll be Summer, you'll be Spring,
Dancing in a fairy ring.

Harry will be Winter wild,
Little Charlie, Autumn mild;
Summer, Autumn, Winter, Spring,
Dancing in a fairy ring.

Spring and Summer glide away,
Autumn comes with tresses grey;
Winter, hand in hand with Spring,
Dancing in a fairy ring.

Faster! faster! round we go,
While our cheeks like roses glow;
Free as birds upon the wing,
Dancing in a fairy ring.

THE HARE AND THE TORTOISE.

A HARE and a Tortoise once set out for a fine spring a few miles off.

The Hare frisked in and out of the road, sometimes running across a field and back again. The Tortoise moved slowly along the road.

The Hare presently said to the Tortoise, "Good bye, friend, I cannot walk your pace. I shall get to the spring some hours before you." And away tripped the Hare.

But after a time he was tired of running about, so he sat down, and fell fast asleep.

When he awoke, he looked about to see if the Tortoise was coming. But, oh! the Tortoise had passed him long ago, and already reached the spring.

MISCELLANEOUS STORIES.

“ROBIN! ROBIN!! POOR ROBINSON
CRUSOE!!!”

ROBINSON CRUSOE was a sailor. He was left by cruel people on an island, far away over the sea. Poor Robinson Crusoe! he had no one to talk to, but himself.

Oh yes! I forgot. He had a very pretty Parrot. There were lots of Parrots flying about on this lovely, lonely island. But *this* Poll *lived* with Robin-son Cru-soe, in his castle by the sea. They used to chit-chat away to each other, like two friends—as indeed they were.

Well, one day Robin went away out to sea, in his tiny boat. And the tide carried him off, ever so far away from his island and his pretty Poll. Robin was nearly upset, *once or twice*. He gave himself up for *lost*.

But the wind blew his tiny boat to another part of the sea; and then the tide carried him back to his island again.

So Robin was not drowned after all! No. He came on shore among the rocks, a long way from his castle and from his pretty Poll. Robin was very tired, as you may guess; so he lay down on the grass to sleep.

Robinson Crusoe fell asleep, and had a dream. He dreamed that some one called him by name. "Robin! Robin!! Robinson Crusoe!!!" the voice seemed to say. He started up, rubbing his eyes. He knew quite well there was not a soul on the island. "What, then, can that voice be?" says Robin to himself. Then he answered—for this was the way he talked to himself—"Oh! it is only a dream!"

Robin lay down again on the grass; and presently he fell into a doze—just between sleeping and waking.

Well! what should he hear again but the *same voice*, calling, "Robin! Robin!! Robinson

Crusoe!!! Where are you? Where are you? How came you here, Robinson Crusoe?" Oh! ho! now he could make it out. It was Polly, who had come a long, long way to seek him.

So Robin held out his thumb, saying, "Pretty Polly!" And Polly flew to him, and fluttered about with joy, and asked him the same questions over and over again. "Poor Robinson Crusoe! Where, have you been? How came you here, Robin, Robin, Robinson Crusoe?" *

POOR OLD ROBINSON CRUSOE.

Poor old Robinson Crusoe,
Poor old Robinson Crusoe,
He made him a coat
Of an old Nanny Goat,
I wonder how he could do so.
With a ring a ting tang
And a ring a ting tang,
Poor old Robinson Crusoe.



* Editor.

SUSY'S DINNER PARTY.

SUSY thought she would give a dinner party among her friends. So when they had come in from their walk, Susy said it was time for their party to begin.

You will be wondering who were to join the party, so I may as well tell you at once. No less than her little brother Robbie and all the Dolls—old and young. And a nice little party it was, I can tell you.

Susy laid out her own table,* and set a cup and saucer for each; also a plate and a spoon for each. Then she brought out of the cupboard such lots of nice things that Mother had given her. First there were cake and toast, and a nicely cut orange; then there were apple-pie and goose-berry pudding and sugar-plums.

Well, they were all waiting—little Robbie and the Dolls; so Susy set to and made the “milk-tea,” as she called it. After that they *all sat down together*—Susy and the new wax

doll at the head of the table, and Robbie, with old Peggy, without a nose, and black Dinah at the foot.

Oh, what a nice feast, and what a nice party to eat it all up!

Robbie behaved like a gentleman. He drank his tea like a fish, and ate his cake and apple-pie like a lion, to be sure; but then he didn't pull and knock things about, you know.

The Dollies too were very good. They did not fall over on their faces, as some ill-bred Dollies do; nor slip from their chairs; nor push each other. There was no scramble nor hurry scurry, oh no!

Well, just as they were all enjoying themselves, who should pop in but Muschy. Now Muschy was a shaggy-haired little dog; and, as he never combed and brushed himself, he was not invited. But, as he thought something nice was going on, in he came by himself.

Well, Susy like a lady gave him a seat at the table, but he would not sit tidily on his

hind-legs at all, at all. Never-the-less, Susy offered him a cup of tea, then a bit of cake, then some goose-berry pudding — but no ! Muschy turned up his nose at every-thing.

You never saw such an ill-behaved little dog.

But after tea, they had romps about the room ; and Muschy joined in the fun. He frisked about, and barked, and got under the chairs and on the table. He frighten'd all the Dolls out of their wits ; but Susy and Robbie knew it was all fun, and so they played on till it was time to go to bed.*



PLAYING AT A HOUSE.

PLEASANT as playing at a house was, Herbert and Meggy did not always agree about things ; trouble even arose now and then between themselves. Sometimes Meggy wanted the fish-kettle to be on the fire, when Herbert insisted that

* Susy's Six Birthdays, &c.

they had dined, and therefore the tea-kettle must be put on. Then if one would not give in to the other, a deal more would be said about it than need be.

Once the children worried themselves about a very foolish thing. Their father was walking in the garden and saw Herbert standing on the grass, and seemingly in great trouble. He was standing by himself, and twirling round on his heel ; but he did not look as if he were thinking about what he was doing. His father walked towards him, and then Herbert looked up.

“ Father,” said he, in a pitiful voice, “ what must we do ? for Meggy says she will never come out of our house again as long as she lives ! ”

“ That is a strange fancy,” said the father ; “ but what is the reason of that ? Perhaps she finds it so very pleasant ; or perhaps you have vexed her ? ”

“ No,” said Herbert, looking at the same time sorely vexed ; “ I’ve been doing nothing to

her. I've only been working in her garden, and now she says she will not come out of the house, and I believe she never will."

"Let us go and see what is amiss with her," said the father, and he walked towards the play-house. Herbert came on slowly behind, looking as if he thought it a very hopeless affair.

When the father reached the door of the little house, he looked in, and there sat Meggy, on a large flower-pot, turned upside down, which was one of the house chairs. She looked very forlorn and miserable; the tears were on her dirty little face, and in one hand she held the corner of her little apron, with which she had been wiping them away. Her father stood in the door-way, and Herbert behind him, though at a little distance.

"Well, Meggy," said her father, "what are you sitting there for?"

"I am not coming out again!" said Meggy, and fresh tears began to flow.

"It will be rather uncomfortable living here,

winter and summer, night and day," said her father, "but you can try it. However, in the first place, let us know what is amiss?"

"I shall not come out again!" said Meggy, weeping more and more.

"Very well," said the father; "but I want to know why?"

"Because Herbert is so unkind—he has done *such a thing!*" said she.

Herbert, who stood near enough to hear every word that passed, now broke a little stick in two, which he was playing with, and looked more out of sorts than ever.

"What has he done?" asked her father.

"Oh, *such a thing!*" said she. "He has buried a dead blackbird, that smelt horribly, in my garden. Was it not shocking?"

Herbert was just ready to run away, but he stopped one minute to hear what his father would say.

"Never mind that!" said he quite cheerfully; "and don't stop for ever in your house, for *such a thing as that!*"

“Now, was it so *very* bad, papa?” asked Herbert, coming boldly forward; “and need Meggy stop all her life in her house for it?”

“I should think not,” said he. “But Herbert, if you have any more blackbirds to bury, put them either in your own garden or in mine. I don’t mind, nor do you; but Meggy does, you see.”

Meggy rose up from her flower-pot; her father wiped away her tears, and Herbert said he would dig the old blackbird up from her garden, if she liked, though it was very deep. Meggy asked her father what he thought about it; he thought it had better stay where it was. Meggy was content, and Herbert very much relieved.*



* Mary Howitt.

TO THE LADY-BIRD.

Lady-bird! lady-bird! fly away home,
The field-mouse has gone to his nest;
The daisies have shut up their sleepy red eyes,
And the bees and the birds are at rest.

Lady-bird! lady-bird! fly away home,
The glow-worm is lighting his lamp;
The dew's falling fast, and your fine speckled
wings
Will be wet with the close-clinging damp.

Lady-bird! lady-bird! fly away home,
The fairy-bells tinkle afar;
Make haste or they'll catch you, and harness
you fast
With a cobweb to Oberon's* car.



* *Oberon*, King of the Fairies.

THE SINGING BIRD.

LUCY, George, and Fanny had a bird given them, in a fine large cage. It was a canary, very young and tame. The children kept this bird during the fine weather out in their own little summer house. There they spent much of their time in talking to it and trying to make it still more tame.

One day George said to his sisters, Lucy and Fanny,—“Listen to me, girls. I have a plan in my head for pleasing mamma very much. She has never heard our bird sing, and I think, with a little trouble, I could teach him to sing that pretty air she taught us,—the little Indian air she learnt from *her* mamma. And if I can do this, we will hang Dick up outside her chamber window early in the morning of her birth-day, and he shall wake her by singing her favorite tune.”

Lucy and Fanny liked this plan very much, and henceforth the children spent more time *than ever* with their pet, whilst George played

very slowly on his fife the song they wished Dicky to learn.

But Dicky was very naughty. Sometimes he would sit on his perch with all his feathers stuck out like a frill, and his head on one side, looking very cross. George, with great patience, would go through the tune over and over again. At the end Dicky would give a sort of little grunting chirp, as much as to say, Ah!—and that was all.

At other times he would not listen at all, but would sing his own song, sweet enough to be sure, but not the one they wanted.

“He will *never* know it,” said little Fanny one day; “it is now only ten days to mamma’s birth-day, and I have never heard him sing a note yet.”

“Hush,” said Lucy, “here it comes, I *do* believe.” But no! Dicky sat as still as a mouse, with his head all on one side, in the most cunning way you can fancy.

The next day, as the children were going to the garden, they heard the air they loved

warbled in a low sweet strain from the summer house.

“*He knows it at last.* The rogue! he has been waiting till he could sing it *well.*” And so it really seemed as if he had; for from this moment Dick warbled away at the pretty air as if he knew no sweeter song.

Lumps of sugar were showered upon him in reward. On the morning of mamma’s birthday the children had the delight of witnessing her pleasure when she was awakened by the Indian air from the bill of the sweet singing bird.*



PASSION AND PATIENCE.

I SAW, in my dream, that the Interpreter took Christian by the hand, and led him into a little room, where sat two children, each one in his chair. The name of the eldest was Passion, and the name of the other

* Child’s Treasury.

Patience. Passion seemed to be much discontented, but Patience was very quiet.

Then Christian asked, "What is the reason of the discontent of Passion?" The Interpreter answered:—

"The Governor would have him stay for his best things till the beginning of the next year; but he will have all now. But Patience is willing to wait."

Then I saw that one came to Passion and brought him a bag of gold, and poured it down at his feet. This Passion took up with gladness, and laughed Patience to scorn.

But I beheld yet awhile, and he had lavished all away, and had nothing left him but rags.

Then said Christian to the Interpreter, "Explain this matter more fully to me."

"These two lads are figures. Passion is a likeness of the men of this world; and Patience is a likeness of the men of the world to come.

"For as here thou seest Passion will have all

now this year, that is to say, in this world. So are the men of this world: they must have all their good things now. They cannot wait till next year, that is, until the next world, for their portion of good. But as thou sawest that he had quickly lavished all away, and had presently nothing left but rags; so will it be with all such men at the end of this world."

Then said Christian, "Now I see that Patience had the best wisdom, and that for many reasons — firstly, because he stays for the best things; and secondly, because he will have the glory of his when the other hath nothing but rags." *



* Bunyan.

THE WAY SOME BOYS LEARN TO WRITE.

WHEN a boy is learning to write, his teacher either writes the first line at the top of the page or else gives him a pattern to copy.

I have often seen a boy write the next line with some care, looking at the letters he had to copy; but when he came to the third line, instead of looking at the copy, he looked only at his own writing just above.

And what came of this? Why, he kept copying his own faults, and made more besides, so that every line down the page was much worse than the one before it.

So, there are some boys who never try to improve their conduct; they seem to copy their own faults day after day, and thus grow worse — more careless, more idle, more selfish, or more wilful.

THE POND AND THE BROOK.

“ NEIGHBOUR BROOK,” said the Pond one d

“ Why do you flow so fast away?

Sultry June is hastening on, —

Then your water will be gone.”

“ Nay, my friend,” the Brook replied,

“ Do not thus my conduct chide;

“ Shall I rather hoard than give?

“ Better die than useless live.”

Summer came, and blazing June

Dried the selfish Pond full soon,

Not a single trace was seen

Where it had so lately been.

But the Brook, it freely flowed

Swift along its pebbly road,

And the pretty flowers around

Loved to hear its happy sound.



STEP BY STEP UPWARDS.

I OFTEN passed some years ago a little slip of waste land by the road-side, covered with broom.

Once as I passed, I saw one of these slips enclosed with a rough fence. By and by, on passing it again, I beheld a little hut of mud and stone, covered with dry fern, and the windows made of oiled paper. A poor, exceedingly poor, family had taken possession of it, and it seemed to swarm with ragged children.

In my later rides past this place, I remarked there were busy hands there at work. The garden grew fuller of plants and vegetables. It, in time, had a goodly row of gooseberry and currant bushes; its rows of peas and beans, its onion and carrot beds.

The house itself grew slowly into better state. First, its rough walls were plastered; then its fern roof gave place to one of good thatch; its paper windows were succeeded by *real glass* ones. Young pear-trees were nailed

to its walls, and apple-trees were planted in the garden.

Presently afterwards, I espied a pigsty. Then I saw another piece of land enclosed; the garden lay on one side of the house, this on the other. The man, said I, grows greedy; what wants he this for? The next time I passed, I saw the soil was dug, and covered with a springing crop of wheat. Here was a corn-field! What can the man have more?

He had something more—a beehive! and year after year, I saw one hive after another set by the side of the first, till there was positively a row of nine under a shed.

The trees in the garden grew up and were covered with fruit; the plot of ground grew thick with its rich crops.

But if the house and garden had increased, so had the children—I never saw such a swarm! The poor man was obliged to lengthen his house as he had lengthened his bee-shed.

*Step by step upwards, that's the thing, said I to myself, as I passed on.**

* Howitt.

READY WIT.

AFTER hard toil for many weeks, the tall chimney of a new factory was built up. The men put the last stroke to their work, and came down as fast as they could. In his haste the last but one drew the rope out of the pulley. This want of care turned their joy to fear.

They saw one man left at the top, with no means to come down. What could be done? There was no scaffold; and no ladder would reach half the height. The men had come down by the pulley; and there it was still, fixed and firm, at the top of the chimney; but the rope lay in a coil on the ground.

They all stood in silence to look up at their lonely friend on the top, while he saw no way of help from their hands below. Just then his wife came by, and with quick thought and good sense, she was able to save her husband. "John," she called out; but what did she say? what did she bid him do? Those who cannot find out must be told.

With all her strength she shouted: — “ John, rove your stocking: begin at the toe.” He knew at once what she meant, and drawing off his stocking, — no doubt knit by his wife, — cut off the end, and soon set free the thread. He roved a long piece, and to this he tied a little piece of brick, and gently let it down for eager hands to reach.

Meantime his wife had brought a ball of thin twine, which was made fast to the worsted. With a shout, they told John to pull up again. He did so, and they heard the words, “ I have it.” The pulley rope was then made fast to the twine.

With a glad heart John drew it up, put it over the pulley. Then snatching up the rest of the stocking, which was to him a keepsake for life, he let himself down as the other men had done, till he reached the ground in safety.*



* Tales That Are True.

PRESENCE OF MIND.

Two men were engaged in painting a grand church.

A plank of wood was slung up for them to stand upon, about forty feet from the ground. The mind of one was so bent on his work, that he, forgetting where he was, began to move away from the picture to see his handiwork in the best light.

He went back slowly, step by step, until he set foot on the very edge of the plank. His friend saw the danger; but how could he prevent it? To speak was in vain, and not to speak made death less sure; for one more step would send the man dashing on a stone floor beneath.

Quick as thought, the friend picked up a stone, and threw it against the wall—thus utterly spoiling the fine picture. With an angry word, the painter made a rush forward to check his friend and to ward off the cruel blow; *but he met a face that was deadly pale. In*

his turn *he* paused and stood looking at his friend, who then pointed out the reason of his strange behaviour.

The storm of rage was over at once, and the painter wept while he blessed the hand which had just robbed him, for a time, of fame, and pride, and joy.*



THE MAN AND THE PARROT.

A CERTAIN man had a parrot. To all the questions they asked it, it answered, "There is no doubt about it." One day he took it to the market to sell it, and fixed the price at twenty pounds. A buyer asked the parrot, "Art thou worth twenty pounds?"

It replied, "There is no doubt about it." The buyer, delighted with the bird, bought it, and carried it home.

Some time after he repented of his bargain,

* Tales That Are True.

and said, "What a fool I was to have thrown my money away!"

"There is no doubt about it," sung out the bird.

THE BOY AND THE KING.

LOUIS THE ELEVENTH, king of France, went one evening down into the kitchen of his palace, and found there a boy about fourteen years of age, who was turning the spit.

The king, struck with the interesting look of the boy, asked him:

"Where do you come from? What is your name? How much do you earn here?"

"I am from Poitiers; my name is Lewis; and I earn as much as the king."

"What does the king earn?"

"His expenses; and I mine," replied the boy.*

ELIZA AND MARY.

ON a market-day, two countrywomen, named Mary and Eliza, walked together towards the town. Each of them carried a heavy basket of fruit. Mary incessantly grumbled, whilst Eliza did nothing but laugh and joke.

Mary said at last to the other girl: "How can you laugh so heartily; your burden is not less heavy than mine, and you are hardly stronger than I?"

The other answered: "I carry an addition to my burden, which, strange to say, makes it lighter."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Mary; "what can *that* be? What do you call it?"

"It is called patience."



SONG OF BOB O' LINK TO THE MOWER.

TINKLE, tinkle, Mister Ninkum,
I am a merry Bob o' Linkum;
Prithee tell me what's the matter
That you're making such a clatter;
Can't you leave us honest folks
To sing our songs and crack our jokes?

It is cruel, Mister Ninkum,
Thus to bother Bob o' Linkum.
I had thought the meadow mine
With its blossoms all so fine;
And I make my little nest
Near the clover all so blest.

But you come, oh naughty Ninkum,
All unheeding Bob o' Linkum—
And you swing your saucy blade,
Where my little nest is made.
And you cut the blooming clover
Which did wrap my young ones over.

Get you gone, oh naughty Ninkum,
Leave the field to Bob o' Linkum,
Let him on his light wing hover
O'er the summer's scented clover:
Let him sing his merry song,
And he'll thank you all day long.*

THE HONEST COTTAGER.

DURING the wars in Germany an officer who was out in search of food for the horses, could not find any corn. Seeing a cottage, he knocked at the door, and an old man came out asking what he wanted.

"Can you," said the officer, "show me where we can find some oats for our horses?"

"Yes," replied the cottager, "if you will wait a few minutes I will lead you."

"They set off, and in about a quarter of an hour arrived at a field of oats. The officer said, "This is exactly the thing."

* Faggots for Fireside.

"Come a little further," said the old man, "and I will show you another."—He then led him to another field, where they filled their sacks. The officer said to the man: "Why did you bring us so far; for the other field is better than this?"

"That is true," said the honest cottager; "but the other does not belong to me, while this does."



THE ACORN.

LOOK at that spreading oak! the pride of the village green: its trunk is massive, its branches are strong. Its roots, like crooked fangs, strike deep into the soil, and support its huge bulk. The birds build among the boughs; the cattle rest beneath its shade. The old men point it out to their children, but they themselves remember not its growth. One after another *has been born, has died, and this son of the*

forest has remained the same, daring the storms of two hundred winters.

Yet this large tree was once a little acorn . small in size, mean in appearance ; such as you pick up upon the grass beneath it. This acorn, whose cup can only contain a drop or two of dew, contained the germ of the whole oak. It grew, it spread, it unfolded itself by degrees ; it received nourish-ment from the rain, the dews, and the rich soil.

Rain, and dews, and soil, could not raise an oak without the acorn ; nor could they make the acorn anything but an oak.

The mind of a child is like the acorn ; its powers are folded up ; they do not yet appear, but they all are there.*



* Mrs. Barbauld.

THE MAN AND THE TURNIP.

A POOR laborer who grew turnips in his garden, found among them one of immense size. He carried it to the Squire, who, as a reward for his industry, gave him two pounds.

A peasant of the same village, who was well-to-do in the world, but very greedy, heard of the affair, and said to himself: "It would not be a bad plan to go and offer the gentleman the finest of my sheep. As he has given two pounds for a turnip, he will give me much more for a beautiful sheep."

He accordingly took his sheep to the Squire, and begged he would accept it.

The Squire immediately saw the man's selfishness, and refused to accept of the present. The peasant entreated him; so he replied:—

"As you force me to accept your present, I will give you something in return which cost me twice the value of your sheep." So he presented him with the enormous turnip.



THE TWO PATHS.

A VILLAGE schoolmaster was one day teaching a class of little girls and boys; and they were listening to him with pleasure, for his teaching was kindly. He was speaking of the good conscience and the bad conscience—of the still, small voice within the heart. When he had done, he asked:—“Which of you can make a parable on what I have been talking?”

One of the boys started to his feet, saying: “I think *I* can, although I am not sure that it is quite right.”

“Tell us it, nevertheless,” said the master; “in your own words and in whatever way you choose.” Then the boy began:—

“I compare the calm of a good conscience and the storm of a bad one to two paths, over which I once walked. The soldiers of the enemy had passed through our village, and carried off by force my dear father, and *our horse*.

“*When father did not come back, mother and*

all of us wept bitterly. At last she sent me to search for him. I went, but had to go back without him. It was a dark night in autumn. The winds roared and howled among the trees and rocks. The night ravens and the owls were screeching and hooting.

"I could not keep from thinking of the loss of our father; and feared the grief of my mother when she found I had come back alone.

"A strange trembling seized me in the dead of the dreary night, and the rustle of every leaf frightened me.

"This, thought I to myself, must be the feeling of a man who has a bad conscience."

"My children," said the master, "would you like to walk about in the darkness of night in search of a lost father; and as you came back without him, hear naught but the ravings of the storm and the screams of the beasts of prey?"

"No!" cried they all, shuddering at the very thought.

The boy continued:—

“Another time I was going the same road with my sister. We had been to the market town to fetch lots of nice things for a feast, with which my father was intending to surprise my mother on her birth day.

“It was the evening, and in spring. The sky was clear and bright. All around was so peaceful that we could hear the rippling of the brook, and the birds singing on every side.

“I was walking hand in hand with my sister; and we were so happy we could scarcely speak. Our father, too, came to meet us.

“Then, thought I to myself,—‘Such is the state of the man who has a pure conscience.’”

The master thanked the boy kindly, and, indeed, I think he deserved the thanks of all.*



* Krummacher

THE THIEF AND THE PIG-STY.

TWO bear-drivers arrived very late at a village-inn. The landlord, who had just sold a pig which he had fattened, locked the bear into the empty sty. At midnight came a thief with the intention of stealing the fat pig.

He opened the door softly; entered, and in the dark took hold of the bear instead of the pig which he hoped to find. The bear rose growling fearfully; seized the thief with his paws, and embraced him so tightly that he could not stir.

The fright and the pain made the fellow scream most dreadfully. It was with great trouble that the owners of the bear succeeded in saving the thief, who was covered with blood and horribly frightened.

THE BOY AND THE STARLING.

AN old gamekeeper had a starling in his room that could utter a few sentences. For instance, when his master said, "Starling, where are you?" the bird never failed to answer, "Here I am."

Little Charles, the son of one of his neighbours, always took a particular pleasure in seeing and hearing the bird, and came frequently to pay it a visit.

One day he arrived during the absence of the gamekeeper. Charles quickly seized the bird; put it into his pocket, and was going to steal away with his booty.

But that very moment the gamekeeper came back. Finding Charles in the room, and wishing to amuse his little neighbour, he called to the bird as usual: "Starling, where are you?"

"Here I am," sung out the bird with all *its might*, from the little thief's pocket.*

* Conversational Tales.

THE GIRL AND HER LITTLE FRIEND.

A POOR lace-maker with a large family who, during a long winter, had been in the bitterest state of misery, was so feeble that he was obliged to keep his bed. On trying to rise, in order to seek for work, he fell fainting by the side of his wife, who was herself very ill.

A girl of twelve or thirteen years watched her mother, and tried to keep her two younger brothers from disturbing their parents. On this child the whole care of the family had fallen.

To supply their wants, she ran to a neighbouring Poor House, where she had been told relief might be got; but the person to whom she applied bid her "Call again." Thus driven away, the child thought she would try begging. This, alas! was a fruitless hope.

In vain did she stretch out her little hands for charity; no one answered her humble request. Chilled by cold no less than by unkindness, she sadly took her way home.

On her appearance, her little brothers imme-

diately cried, "Bread! sister, give us bread!" On hearing the screams of the children, she exclaimed, "I will fetch a loaf from the baker's." Hardly knowing what she was doing, she ran to a neighbouring shop; seized a loaf, and hurried away! The baker saw the thief, laid hold of her, and called a policeman. The little girl looked round on the gathering crowd for a glance of pity. At last she noticed a little girl about her own age; to her she told her artless tale.

Whilst the poor family were in the agonies of want and despair, a light step was heard approaching their chamber. A cry of joy was uttered by the starving family—a girl appeared at the door—it was not their child! It was a little angel with rosy cheeks and golden hair, and bearing a small basket of provisions.

"Your daughter is not likely to return home to-day," she said, "perhaps not to-morrow. Fear not; she is well; be cheerful *and eat what she has sent you.*" She then *placed ten shillings* in the hands of the mother, *and suddenly* went away.

But how had the money been got?

We shall see.

Her golden tresses, falling in ringlets over her shoulders, had been the delight of her neighbours. One of these, a hairdresser, had said, when she was passing his house, "I would willingly give a pound for that beautiful head of hair."

Well, this kind-hearted little creature remembered the man's words, sought his shop, and said, "You have offered to buy my hair for a pound; now I will sell it to you. Cut it off quickly. Make haste, for I am in a great hurry." The man asked the reason of so strange a request, and having a kind heart, he feigned to make the bargain. He gave her fifteen shillings, saying,—that, as she was then in a hurry, she might come again to have her hair cut off.

The end of this pretty story you may now guess. The poor family got back their daughter, and with her, health, comfort, and joy returned to their humble dwelling.

THE BOY AND HIS DOG.

A LITTLE boy, of the name of Darwin, had a beautiful spaniel dog, which was called Argus.

The boy was taken ill, and after a few days' sickness, died, and the dog followed the family to the grave.

For several days the dog was missed from the house; but at length he returned, and after looking around, as if in search of something, he went away.

Again he returned and went as before; and what is very singular, the family missed several things that belonged to little Darwin.

They watched the dog when he came back, and saw him take his young master's top, and run off with it towards the grave-yard.

On following the dog they found, in a hole which he had scraped in the grave, a cap, a pair of shoes, and several toys.

They took poor Argus away, and shut him up at home; but he refused to eat, and moaned *so dolefully that they let him go.* He went to *the grave, and there remained till he died.*

THE DISOBEDIENT KITTEN.

"Now," said an old Puss to one of her children, as she washed her face and paws, "I charge you, Kitty, not to go into the gentleman's yard, for the great dog Jowler lies there. He has horrid teeth and a terrible snarl, and he is always on the look-out for stray cats. Remember, and keep at home; we have a snug garden, a sweet hay-mow, kind friends, capital titbits, and work enough, — rats and mice are plenty. So, do not stroll off with bad company, visiting places where you have no business to be, and disgracing your bringing up; for you know better, Kitty, you do."

But Kitty gave a saucy look; she boxed her mother's ears — in play, to be sure — hoisted her tail, and away she frisked after a dead leaf. Kitty did not look at all like minding.

After her mother had gone to bed on the hay-mow, she kept up her moonlight rambles.

going about nobody knows where, and cutting all sorts of capers, like a silly little Kit as she was.

Well, one night she and some of her thoughtless companions scudded across Jowler's yard. He, much disturbed by the noise at an hour when he thought all honest folk ought to be in bed, started up and made after them in a violent rage. Poor Kitty, in her fright, got en-tangled in some briar-bushes, and so fell into Jowler's jaws. He seized her by the neck with his terrible mouth, shook the breath out of her body, and tossed her over the fence.

"Oh, oh!" cried Mary and Willie, when they found their little pet stiff and cold the next morning. "Oh," cried their mother, "you little puss! You bid fair to be an excellent mouser." "Oh dear!" mewed the old cat.

MA-RY'S PET LAMB.

MARY had a little lamb,

Its fleece was white as snow,
And every where that Mary went,
The lamb was sure to go.

He went with her to school one day;
That was against the rule;
It made the children laugh and play,
To see a lamb at school.

So the teacher turn'd him out,
But still he linger'd near,
And waited patiently about,
Till Mary did appear.

And then he ran to her, and laid
His head upon her arm,
As if he said, I'm not afraid;
You'll keep me from all harm.

"What makes the lamb love Mary so?"
The eager children cry;
"Why, Mary loves the lamb, you know,"
The teacher did reply.

THE GREAT SHEPHERD.

KNOWEST thou how many stars
There are shining in the sky?
Knowest thou how many clouds
Every day go floating by?
God, the Lord, has counted all;
He would miss one should it fall.

Knowest thou how many flies
Flicker in the noon-day sun?
Or of fishes in the water?
God has counted every one.
Every one he called by name,
When into the world it came.

Knowest thou how many babes
Go to little beds at night?
That without a care or trouble
Wake up with the morning light?
God in heaven each name can tell;
Knows *thee* too, and loves thee well.

THE END.

